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WILBUR P. DAVIS, PROP'R.

WILBUR P. DAVIS, Editors.
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General Miscellany.

DELILAH.

Sir Thomas Winton and I are fellow-directors of a company which will never, I fear, make the fortunes of either of us; but it pays its way—five per cent on capital, the salaries of secretaries, clerks, and porter, and the guinea-fees of the directors, are always punctually forthcoming. Now, it is a singular fact, that however well off a man may be, a guinea always has an attraction for him; and Sir Thomas Winton, when in town, is very regular in his attendance at the Board.

The charms of general conversation are not unknown to those social business gatherings, and Sir Thomas and I often discuss our favorite topics. He is a sporting character; my hobby is the drama. If I open the conversation, I politely affect an interest in Derby prospects; mention the Middle Park sale of yearlings or inquire tenderly after the baronet's patridges and pheasants. If, on the other hand, it is Sir Thomas who takes the lead, he inquires what I think of the last new French adaptation put up at the London stage. And so a certain intimacy has sprung up between us.

"Are you anything of a shot, Mr. Chevers?" Sir Thomas asked me one day early in last July.

"I am very much out of practice," I replied; "but I used to be a fair average performer with the gun some years ago. When I got an odd day now, I am apt to be too anxious."

"At any rate, you are fond of sport?" "Very."

"Then you must come down to my place, and try your hand—will you?"

"You are very kind."

"And if you like a day or two's hunting for a change I will give you a mount."

"Thank you; I shall be most happy."

"You will not mind coming rather late in the season? We generally have a houseful of young people in November, and I keep some covers unbeaten for the occasion. And if we have a touch of frost, there will be some snipe."

I thanked Sir Thomas Winton again and thought no more of the matter.

Invitations of that kind are so very rare after luncheon—sherry being a heart-expanding fluid—and are so often forgotten, that I never expected to hear again of this one. I was quite surprised, therefore, when a kind letter from Sir Thomas came in November, reminding me of my promise to come and stay with him, and fix the day.

So I went down to Winton, and found that Sir Thomas had a very good notion of fitting up a country-house. Every bedroom had a dressing room attached with a bath in it, and hot and cold water laid on; and a warm bath before dinner, after violent exercise, is one of the greatest luxuries in the sylvan list. Then the breakfast arrangements were capital: guests entered the room at any hour they pleased, rang the bell, and ordered what they liked, just as if they were at a hotel. But all this, which is common enough in large English country-houses, does not give the idea of comfort I wish to convey, and which consisted in the ease and smoothness with which all the wheels of the household turned. There was no fuss or bother, or forced hospitality; but if you wanted anything, you got it at once, without trouble or delay.

But I am anticipating. I have only just reached the house at present. Sir Thomas Winton was a widower, and his present family consisted of two daughters, somewhere between eighteen and thirty and son in the Lanciers, now at home on leave. There were several guests besides myself: Captain Seymour, a brother officer of young Winton's, with a suspected desire of forming another fraternal connection with him; "Paddy" O'Brian of the Foreign Office, a sort of social Crichton; and others. Of the farrier visitors, I need only mention one, Ada Dart, for what man of sound mind could notice any other girl when she was in the room? Well, Captain Seymour could do so, but then he was infatuated and not of sound mind—suffering from younger Miss Winton on the brain, in fact. It surprised me very much to see the beautiful Ada sail into the drawing-room before dinner on the evening of my arrival. I had met her at a dinner party and three balls; I had attended her with grateful humility throughout the whole of a picnic, and her image rose before me rather more often than I liked. It is very unpleasant to be haunted by a face; to see it whenever you smoke a quiet solitary pipe; when you lean back and shut your eyes in a railway-carriage; when you are trying to get to sleep at night. I really do not know which is worst—to have a beautiful woman or a tune running in your head.

Of course I was not in that absurd state which the ancients styled "enamored," and the moderns "spoony;" I am free from such an extreme of weakness. But to a certain sort of attraction, or fancy, or admiration, I must plead guilty. Marriage is a state which is considered by many hard-headed practical men to have its advantages, and it did occur to me that if ever I tested them, it would be rather pleasant to do so in partnership with Ada Dart.

I had no idea that she was acquainted with the Wintons, and her unexpected

presence looked quite like a fatality. If ever, when expecting to find yourself in the midst of strangers, you have discovered a familiar face amongst them, you may remember what a pleasant revelation it caused in your feelings, and how a mere acquaintance bore the look of intimate friendship by the contrast. "What said I," do you know the Wintons?"

"Yes," she replied, and looked rather astonished at my tone. "I have known them since I was quite a tiny thing; Sarah Winton is my great ally."

Her reply showed an absurdity in my undue assumption of intimacy in my exclamation, which would have been very numbering to reflect upon in the presence of the most ladies; but Ada Dart was like the sun; it was impossible to feel cold or numb when she was shining on you; and she always shone; I do not believe she ever snubbed a poor fellow in her life. She would laugh at him, indeed, on very slight provocation, but those who would have resented it, would have been the first to find fault with her. The sooner in any one else, were never offended at Ada; no one ever frowned at her, or disliked her, or scolded her, or failed to pet and spoil her since she was first placed in the cradle, I believe.

And a ridiculous proverb asserts that beauty is only skin deep! For she was beautiful; even other beauties acknowledged that. All they could do was to compare her with models of a totally distinct style, or to suggest that certain natural charms might be due to art. She was plump and white as a baby; each of her large hazel eyes had a distinct soul in it; where other mortals possessed knuckles, she had dimples; her hair was a flower, her— But I dare not dwell on her charms, so pray, try to imagine them. It is an impossibility; but never mind—try.

I could not remain long by her side, the room was full of strangers, with whom I had now to form acquaintance for the first time, even the ladies of the house being unknown to me. I was eventually pared of with a companion who was much interested in the Catholic revival, and evidently thought little of me after making the unfortunate discovery that I did not know what colored stole should be worn in ember-weeks. My dinner was spoiled by a perpetual dread of speaking with levity of things she revered; and if I had not at last hastily hit upon the safe course of violently abusing the Low Church party, I believe that I should have an indigestion.

The place I coveted at the side of Ada Dart was filled by Paddy O'Brian, who had a wonderful and enviable power of showing politeness and apparent attention to the general company, while really attaching himself to one select individual. I had met O'Brian at the same parties as Ada, but had never noticed any particular attentions on his part. Now, however, he seemed to be establishing a flirtation in form, which was serious; for a man may go very far in a public ball-room with comparative impunity, but trifling in a country-house is a very different matter.

Before the evening was over I felt certain that I had no chance of "walking over" for the prize, and also that she was worth winning; for Paddy was not the man to court undowered beauty; indeed, he could not afford so romantic a proceeding.

When the ladies retired, most of the men repaired to the billiard-room, where cigars and grog were provided; but the majority were tired and went to bed early, leaving O'Brian and myself to finish a game.

"Well," said he as soon as we were alone, "I suppose that you and I have been asked down here for the same thing."

"Oh yes; the shooting you mean," I replied.

"Shooting! That's the polite way of saying us. They want us to help them with their private theatricals."

"Oh, they are going to get up private theatricals, are they?"

"To be sure, or you would never have been asked to Winton Hall, nor I either, faith! I got it all out of Miss Dart."

"Who will tell us what to do about scenery, dresses, and all the little details?" said Miss Winton, when the family took the stage-leave badly last summer. "Don't you know some one, papa?"

"I have it!" cried Sir Thomas. "One of our directors is great on the drama; at least he talks of nothing else, and though not a Solomon, that seems to be his specialty."

"But is he presentable?" asked Julia Winton—Seymour's girl, you know.

"O yes," replied Sir Thomas; "he has paid up on his shares, and he aspires his *his*, and he has really very fine whiskers!"

"Shut up, O'Brian!" said I. "Do not foist off your own impertinences upon the innocent. And what were you asked here for?"

"To act, of course." If it had not been for my success in Sir Lucius O'Trigger at Lady Soek's, I might have gone long before ever I'd have been a guest in this elegant establishment. Oh, there is no shirking the truth with me, my boy; nobody does anything for nothing in this world."

There was undoubtedly a sediment of truth at the bottom of this frothy cynicism of O'Brian's; for on the following day, the subject of private theatricals was quietly broached in my presence by the Misses Winton; and it soon became evident that their heads, and those of the majority of their guests, were running upon nothing else, so that even if the drama had not been my particular hobby, my sympathetic nature would have been carried away by the general excitement.

My theatrical tastes had never as yet led me to take part in any performances, and, indeed, of the ladies and men forming the present company, Ada Dart and O'Brian were the only two who were not about to make their first appearance upon any stage. Of course, these experienced members took a prominent lead, besides being necessarily drawn together in a confidential way, which was very unpleasant for me to witness. Jealousy and envy so stirred my bile that I was inclined to regret the good old days of duelling, when I might have picked a

quarrel with my rival, and so had a chance of removing him from my path. But the way in which the odious Irishman knocked over the pheasants and rabbits, and a particular snap-shot, fired from the hip, which was fatal to a woodcock, forced me to own that there was a deep truth in the ingenious assertion so constantly repeated in newspaper articles, that private combat is a "cowardly practice."

But I had my turn of being placed *en raptures* with the entrancing Ada. The fine old hall of Winton Park was to be our theatre, and it was my particular province to take the best advantage of the many natural facilities of the place; to arrange about the scenery; to find out what were the proper dresses for the plays we were to perform, &c.; and Ada Dart being the only person whose counsel was of real service in a case of difficulty, I was perpetually obliged to appeal to her. Dangerously intoxicating were those conferences, which, I confess, I prolonged needlessly; indeed, I used sometimes to get up a vexatious opposition to her wishes, in order to give our discussion a matrimonial flavor. Heigh-ho!

The plays selected were *Belle of Penzance*, followed by the farce of *Eyes and Nose*, and the distribution of parts was a work for Job or Solomon, most of the company at first declaring their utter inability to take the simplest characters, and coming around gradually to demanding the principal roles. At our first general meeting, it really seemed doubtful whether it would be possible to cast the mildest and lightest pieces in the British repertoire; but at the end of a fortnight, if *Ohello* could have been written with three Moors, four Desdemonas, and two Iagos, our little company "had stomach for them all." When we came to actual trial, however, the powers of each performer got to be estimated by the others at somewhere about their right value, and we got settled into our places accordingly.

I was cast for "Fortescue," which was too prominent a part for my taste; for besides that, on principle, I very much prefer that other people should amuse me to reversing that proceeding, I hated to have so much to learn by heart.

That was another odd effect—we all seemed to have gone back to school. At every turn in the house or grounds, you would come upon a young lady or gentleman, with knitted brows, and eyes fixed on either earth or sky, muttering, "I say, Chevers, just hear me my part, like a good fellow." Captain Seymour would say. Then a young lady would make a similar request, and put her hands behind her back while repeating her task, from sheer force of association. Two to one, if, when playing at billiards, the striker, after using the long rest, said: "Just give me my cue please," some one exclaimed: "Hark, they come!" or, "But more of this anon!" or, "We will speak further upon the matter."

Soon matters began to run smoothly, and we had our first rehearsal. By recalling to mind the different actors I had seen in my part, and endeavoring to imitate them, I succeeded better than I had anticipated, and gained considerable applause. "But," said O'Brian, "you must shave, you know. The idea of 'Fortescue' with those whiskers is too absurd."

Now, my whiskers were black pendant, silky, and had cost me an infinity of trouble. It had taken five years of constant care and scientific training to bring them to their present state of perfection. Any one without experience in the matter would hardly credit the amount of time and labor, not to mention the mere money, that I had expended upon them. Little soft brushes, delicate combs, bottles of a peculiar oil, more delicate than is ever used for the head, and called "Brilliantine," were appropriated to their service. When I visited my hairdresser, that artist would deliberate for at least five minutes before he could come to a definite conclusion upon the important point whether he should take the "hends" off. When I took my walks abroad at Scarborough, and the breezes fluttered them over my shoulders, scornful indeed was the beauty whose eyes did not light up with admiration as she passed. Even envious men were unable to withhold their tribute of praise. "Chevers, my boy," observed Rivers, who has spent his own fortune, and is looking out for a wife's "my figure is twenty thousand; but, by gad, if I had your face-hair, I'd make it forty!"

You may judge my feelings, then, when it was seriously proposed that I should shave. I repudiated the notion with an earnestness which seemed to amuse some of the company, and they all set to work to argue me out of my objection to the sacrifice.

"They will grow again," said one Miss Winton.

"I am sure Mr. Chever's face would look better without them," added the other.

"Yes; there is a particularly fine contour, which is completely hidden at present," said O'Brian.

"How do you know that, Paddy?"

"Contour or not," said I, firmly, "if you cannot put up with a whiskered 'Fortescue,' some one else must take the part." And to that resolution I stuck in spite of flattery, persuasion, and satire for three days. And I got it hot, too, at times.

First one and then another male citizen was tried in my part, and found wanting.

On the fourth morning after breakfast, Ada Dart expressed a wish to learn how to play at billiards. O'Brian was not in the room, and I seized the opportunity of offering my services, which were accepted. She had been singularly reticent upon the razor question, a circumstance which led me to hope that she would not have seen the sacrifice expected from me without a pang; but now, while I was engaged in the too perilous occupation of teaching her how to make a bridge, she broached the subject.

"I am sorry, Mr. Chevers," said she, "that you cannot take the part of 'Fortescue.' You must change with Mr. O'Brian; that is the only way in which

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St. Albans, Feb. 10th, 1868.

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Commencing April 13, 1868.

TRAINS GOING SOUTH AND EAST

Leave St. Albans at 6.15 a. m., 12.00 noon, and 7.20 p. m.

Mail Train leaves St. Albans at 6.15 a. m., and connects at Burlington with Rutland Road, at White River Junction and Bellows Falls with trains for Boston, Worcester, Springfield, and with trains on Passumpsic R. R., arrives at New York at 10.45 p. m.

Day Express leaves Montreal at 8.30 a. m., St. Johns at 10.00 a. m., Ogdensburg at 5.30 a. m., Rouse's Point at 10.45 a. m., for Boston, &c., arriving in Boston, via Lowell at 10.30 p. m.

Night Express leaves Ogdensburg at 11.30 a. m., Montreal at 3.30 p. m., Rouse's Point at 5.40 p. m., St. Johns at 4.50 p. m., arriving at Boston at 8.40 a. m., connecting at Bellows Falls with the Cheshire Road for Boston and Worcester and with Vermont Valley Railroad for Springfield, &c., and arriving in New York at 12.30 p. m.

TRAINS GOING NORTH AND WEST

Leave for Montreal at 6.10 a. m., 6.50 p. m. For Rouse's Point and Ogdensburg at 6.05 a. m., 12.05 p. m., and 3.10 p. m.

Day Express leaves Montreal via Lowell 8.03 a. m., for Burlington, St. Albans, Montreal, &c. Mail Train leaves Boston via Lowell at 7.30 a. m., via Lawrence and Fitchburg at 7.30 a. m., Springfield at 7.45 a. m., for Burlington, and St. Albans.

Accommodation Train leaves Northfield at 8.00 a. m., for Burlington, Rutland, St. Albans, Rouse's Point, Ogdensburg, &c.

Night Express leaves Bellows Falls at 10.00 p. m., receiving passengers from Vermont Valley Railroad, leaving New York at 12.15 p. m., and from Cheshire Railroad, leaving Boston at 5.30 p. m., connecting at White River Junction with train leaving Boston at 5.30 p. m., for Burlington, Rouse's Point, Montreal and Ogdensburg, connecting with Grand Trunk Trains for the West.

Sleeping cars are attached to both the night Express trains running between St. Albans and Boston, and St. Albans and Springfield.

Through tickets for Chicago and the West for sale at the principal stations.

G. MERRILL, Sup. St. Albans, April 13, 1868.

RUTLAND AND BURLINGTON AND VT. RAILWAY RAILROAD.

On and after Dec. 2d, 1867, trains will run as follows, viz:

MOVING SOUTH AND EAST.

Leave Burlington at 8.30 a. m., 1.30 p. m., 3.30 p. m., 9.45 p. m. Arrive at Rutland at 11.25 a. m., 4.10 p. m., 8.00 a. m., 12.50 p. m.

Leave Rutland at 4.50 a. m., 12.00 p. m. Arrive Bellows Falls at 7.